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Analysis and Compliance Enforcement in SALT Verification

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The deteriorating state of Soviet-American relations attending Moscow's invasion of Afghanistan has tended to obscure an exceedingly important fact. This is, the Carter Administration's announced intention to adhere to the terms of the SALT II Treaty, in the absence of Senate ratification. From both a political and a legal point of view, the wisdom of that decision is dubious at best. But given the manifest flaws in the terms of SALT II,¹ and in particular our limited ability to monitor and enforce Soviet compliance with its terms, the Administration's decision is irresponsible.

The Carter Administration, like the Nixon and Ford Administrations before it, officially claims in public that the Soviets have complied with all aspects of both elements of SALT I—the ABM Treaty and the Interim Executive Agreement on Offensive Weapons. This is merely because the U.S. has never charged the Soviets with a SALT violation. But the true record of Soviet activities related to SALT I, which is gradually coming into the open, shows that the Soviets have *not* been in compliance with its terms in several important cases, and that the Carter Administration has tolerated and in some instances even concealed Soviet circumvention and violation. The Carter Administration's misleading of the Congress and the American people on Soviet compliance with SALT I is identical to the Nixon Administration's misleading of the Congress and the people regarding both the meaning of the terms of SALT I in 1972 and Soviet compliance from October 1972 through December 1976.

The consequences of this collective deception are far-reaching, and emphasize the importance of adequate verification in any arms control agreement. Moreover, what that entails is more complex than is generally understood. Most recognize that verification includes intelligence collection and monitoring. But no matter how good that may be, the most important factors in SALT verification are the analysis and enforcement of Soviet compliance.² The purpose of this article is to examine the problems of analysis and enforcement of compliance in SALT verification, based on the record of SALT I and some concerns that have recently arisen affecting the potential verification difficulties with SALT II.

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